

Draft
Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2019

Members Present

Bea Shapiro, Chair
Nathan Pullen
Mark Nelson
Ed Gervasoni
Sue LeHew

Members Absent

Terri Hedgpeth

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Bob Kresmer

Call to Order and Introductions

Bea Shapiro, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of July 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Ed Gervasoni motioned to approve the July 17, 2019 meeting minutes. Sue LeHew seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

VRATE Discussion

Bea Shapiro stated that she developed a draft program of discussion topics for the committee's presentation at Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) that could be made into handouts and a Power Point presentation. Mark Nelson inquired whether the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor should be included in the worksite assessment team. Bea Shapiro stated the counselor was responsible for participating in the worksite assessment and to have discussions with the employer. Sue

LeHew stated the counselor's role as a team member was to obtain authorizations, read the report, and to act on the recommendations, and noted that the counselor did not necessarily have to be at the assessment meeting. Mark Nelson suggested the counselor's role be clarified in the program document. Bea Shapiro stated that the counselors needed to understand the types of Assistive Technology (AT) that would be needed for the employee. Sue LeHew inquired whether the Purchasing Technician (PT) should be included in the worksite assessment team also. Bea Shapiro stated the PT was responsible for entering the authorizations. Sue LeHew stated the program document favored the VR process and inquired whether the VRATE audience would understand the process described. Bea Shapiro stated that she included the team member "client/employee" to indicate that the individual was a client of VR and an employee. She noted the client/employee had already received the job offer and the assessment team was there to identify any accommodations needed. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the VRATE audience. Bea Shapiro stated the ideal audience would include employers, counselors, clients, and AT Specialists. Bob Kresmer inquired whether there had been efforts to invite employers to attend VRATE. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that Jordan Moon had invited employers to attend VRATE. Nathan Pullen stated the Employment Committee could send invites to employers to attend VRATE, although his concern was that the VRATE audience was typically individuals seeking Independent Living (IL) services rather than employment. Nathan Pullen stated he would not want to overwhelm employers with an audience that was not seeking work and would rather invite employers to Employment Committee events that targeted job seeking individuals. Mr. Pullen stated he would recommend that IT professionals that provided ADA accommodations be invited to attend VRATE. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that the first day of VRATE would focus on employment and the second day would focus on IL, seniors, and students that were interested in seeing the AT. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the individual that was responsible for inviting individuals to attend VRATE. Bea Shapiro stated she was unsure, although Ben Fox and Jordan Moon were making efforts to reach out to employers to attend the event.

Bea Shapiro stated the committee would provide a one-hour presentation, which would allow individuals to attend other presentations. Sue LeHew inquired whether the title of the presentation should clarify the purpose of the evaluation, which would be a blindness or blindness and visual impairment worksite assessment. Bea Shapiro stated at the previous meeting, Terri Hedgpeth had suggested the presentation title be Worksite Assessment Tools, or WAT, although WAT was a term already used in VR and could be confusing. Mark Nelson suggested the evaluation team members be clarified to indicate which individuals would be attending the

assessment and noted that some employers would not want so many individuals attending the evaluation meeting. Bea Shapiro stated that typically, the IT staff, supervisor and client would attend the evaluation. She noted that the employee should understand what was being recommended to make the worksite accessible for that individual. Sue LeHew suggested that some evaluation team members be listed as optional on-site team members. Mark Nelson stated the employer should include the team members required for the worksite assessment. Mark Nelson stated the presentation should also include discussion regarding the tasks of the job and noted that if an employee was unable to perform the critical tasks of the job, that individual could not receive reasonable accommodations to perform those tasks. Sue LeHew stated the presentation could include discussion regarding the essential functions of the job, and that if an individual was unable to perform those functions, that job would not be appropriate for that individual. Bea Shapiro stated one challenge with worksite evaluations, was that the IT department would not participate in the assessment, and the businesses needed to understand that the employee needed access to the computers in order to perform the job. Sue LeHew stated that each discussion point could be included in the Power Point presentation. Bea Shapiro stated the presentation could include the roles and responsibilities of each evaluation team member.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether there was a significant difference between a worksite evaluation for a government position compared to a private business position. Mark Nelson stated that some small businesses might not have the required IT to provide the AT accommodations, although some government agencies would have their standard IT and would need to obtain additional IT or AT products. Bea Shapiro stated the committee had also discussed including a hands-on demonstration during the presentation and to point audience members to some of the exhibitors at the event. Ms. Shapiro inquired whether any committee members would be willing to assist with the development of the Power Point presentation. Sue LeHew stated that Bea Shapiro could supply the content, and she would be willing to develop the Power Point slides. Bea Shapiro stated that she would prefer the presentation materials completed by October and she would send the materials to the committee members to review. Sue LeHew stated the presentation could include a list of evaluation items that an evaluator should know when performing a worksite assessment. Bea Shapiro stated she had an AT Assessment Tools document that could locate. Mark Nelson inquired whether the presentation should include a mention that the worksite evaluation might not be completed in one meeting. Bea Shapiro agreed and stated that could be included in the presentation.

AT Trends

Bea Shapiro stated that Google would add a spellcheck feature to Gmail. Sue LeHew stated that Google had a command for that tool, although the command did not function. Mark Nelson stated there was a shortage in Intel processors making it difficult to obtain laptops for clients and no solution had been identified. Sue LeHew suggested that VR staff be notified that vendors were dealing with that issue. Mark Nelson stated the vendors were trying to obtain the AT, and noted the counselors needed to authorize any technology purchases in a timely manner. Bea Shapiro stated there were times when the Individualized Employment Plans (IEP) were not signed off on, which was not the counselor's fault. Bob Kresmer requested that Mark Nelson send him that information and he could discuss the issue with RSA. Mark Nelson stated the Intel processors that were available were more expensive, and individuals were not able to purchase the affordable options.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for September 18, 2019 from 3:00-4:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- VRATE Discussion
- Collaboration with Education Committee Discussion
- AT Trends

Announcements

Bob Kresmer stated the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) State Conference would be held on August 30, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency in Phoenix. Mr. Kresmer stated the conference would include a technology, student, and senior seminars and all SBVID staff had been invited to attend.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no comments forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Mark Nelson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Nathan Pullen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.